



The Faithful Steward

A Newsletter of the Holy Orthodox Church in North America

"We are all called to be faithful and wise stewards, ever waiting for the coming of our Lord ." LUKE 12:40-46

A Short Biography of Bishop Demetrius of Carlisle

Bishop Demetrius was born in Toronto on November 28, 1974, and was a parishioner of St. Nectarios Cathedral in the same city. His ancestors came from a village outside of Florina in Macedonia, Greece.

From his youngest years he had a special love for the things of God and our holy Orthodox Faith. When asked what motivated him to make the decision to become a monk, he answered: "There were many things which affected me in my decision to follow the monastic way of life. In fact, I always viewed it as the Christian way of life par excellence. On a daily basis one is able to attend the Divine Liturgy, partake of the holy mysteries, hear the lives of the saints, learn the services, learn the theology of the Church which the holy services teach us, etc. This is the best form of education, even though we fall short of our calling, and is the 'art of arts and science of sciences' as St. Nicephorus the Solitary calls it."

There are three people in Bishop

Demetrius' life who had a particular impact on his decision; three "living examples."

The first is his maternal grandmother, the recently tonsured Nun Paraskevi. Until the age of ten, Bishop Demetrius had a lot of contact with her since they lived very close to each other. He recalls that "everything we ever talked about with my grandmother was centered around God.

She would always bless, always pray, and always bring to mind her sinfulness. More often than not, she would even come to compunction while doing so. She was a very simple soul. After those ten years we moved, and both my grandparents would very often spend weeks at a time at our house. My grandmother would always sleep in the same room as me, but her sleep was extremely minimal. I would wake up once, twice, three times in the middle of the night and there she would be, on her knees with uplifted arms in prayer and streams of tears falling down her face. With no excep-



Bishop Demetrius, Consecrated on August 21/ September 3, 2006

tion, it was always like that with her."

The second example was the holy Tarso, a Fool-for-Christ's sake. When he was thirteen, Bishop Demetrius visited his relatives in Keratea, Greece. Tarso had a little hut in the fields by their home. "That was an awesome experience. The superhuman asceticism of a Fool-for-Christ's

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sake makes it obvious how they score ‘10 points more,’ (as related in the life of St. Symeon the Fool-for-Christ’s sake). It was a great blessing for me to see her, speak to her, spend time with her, and receive her blessing.” She reposed shortly thereafter and became well known in Greece for her miracles.

The third example was the holy Elder Joachim of Mount Athos. For about five years they corresponded via air mail. Bishop Demetrius states that he actually had his mind set on becoming a monk on Mount Athos and it was mainly Metropolitan Makarios who dissuaded him from doing so. “A few months prior to my entering Holy Transfiguration Monastery, I spent some precious and valuable time with the holy elder in the desert area of Mount Athos, near the cave of St. Nilus the Myrrh-streamer. Elder Joachim had me follow the typicon of his hesychasterion (in honor of St. Euthymius the Great) as a novice. For example, if anyone came to visit, I would not speak without a blessing. I believe that I made my first steps in monasticism as a novice with Elder Joachim. It was also a nice blessing to wear the skoufaki and use the prayer-rope of St. Nectarius the Wonderworker of Pentapolis, which they treasured at the hesychasterion.” The hesychastic spirit of Elder Joachim left a deep impression on Bishop Demetrius. “Those vigil services, and especially the Divine Liturgy with Elder Joachim, were out of this world. They were unforgettable, as was the sanctity which showed forth from the Elder during them.

“After my visit to Mount Athos, I also visited Archbishop Auxentius and spent hours talking to him. This was just a few months before his blessed repose. He also left a deep impression on me, more so than when he visited our parish in 1989. When I left his convent, I was deemed worthy to receive his skoufaki as a blessing. The Archbishop also said to me, ‘If anyone were to come to ask for a blessing to enter a monastery, I would send him to Boston.’”

After entering the monastery, Bishop Demetrius spent almost 12 years living in obedience. At the age of 25 he was ordained deacon at Holy Transfiguration Monastery, and under obedience has served with its founder, Archimandrite Panteleimon, in Greece and at Holy Theotokos Convent in Newmarket, ON. In 2005 he was ordained a priest at St. Nectarius Cathedral in Toronto. His consecration as Bishop of Carlisle took place on August 21/September 3, 2006 at St. Mark’s Cathedral in Roslindale, MA.

Bishop Demetrius concludes by saying, “I remember how embarrassed I was after being ordained a deacon. I was the only one with a black beard. All the other clergymen had grey hair. Then I realized that I was the youngest deacon of The Holy Orthodox Church in North America (HOCNA). When I was ordained priest, I was still the youngest clergyman, until Fr. Michael Knox was ordained deacon. And now I am the youngest bishop! This means one thing: we need to start ordaining young men to the diaconate and priesthood. May God grant us worthy candidates!”



Capturing a moment with newly-consecrated Bishop Demetrius and Metropolitan Makarios



Bishop Demetrius blessing the faithful

Sad to say Most Christians Now See Nothing Wrong With the Practice of Cremation

By Mike Christopulos

Slightly edited from *The Sword*, January 2006

During the first 1800 years of Christianity, and even before that during Old Testament times, most people strongly opposed the practice of cremation.

That's no longer true. Most denominations and clergy now see nothing wrong with this revolting act. Alvin J. Schmidt makes that perfectly clear in his fact-laden, 123-page book, *Dust to Dust or Ashes to Ashes?*

Schmidt carefully examines cremation from a biblical and Christian perspective. In his tome, Schmidt lays out a very strong and compelling case that Christians should not cremate their loved ones once they die.

Even though modern cremation began to assert itself in the late 1800's, wide acceptance didn't take place for a number of years, Schmidt wrote.

In 1900 there were only 2,414 (.003 percent) deceased persons cremated in the United States. Even in 1960, the American cremation rate was relatively low when 60,987 (or 3.56 percent) were cremated. By 2001, the number of cremations in the U.S. had risen to 27.25 percent. In Canada the rate has increased even more rapidly, to 46.5 percent in 1999, and in England about 85 percent of all deaths are presently cremated.

According to Schmidt, one estimate indicates that the American cremation rate will climb to 40 percent by the year 2010, approaching Canada's rate of 46.5 percent.

The first "break in the dike" occurred in 1710, he noted "when a Mrs. John Pratt, wife of the treasurer of Ireland and apparently a Christian, asked to be incinerated when she died. At this time in history, Pratt was

a lone voice calling for cremation; yet, a century and a half later, in the mid-1800's, a seismic shift occurred in Western culture as advocates of cremation publicly began questioning Christianity's burial-only policy by seeking to replace it with cremation."

In terms of a Christian response to this modern cremation movement, the Roman Catholic Church was the only Christian denomination that formally opposed the practice when it was reintroduced in the West, Schmidt wrote.

Throughout the entire Old Testament, cremation, the act of destroying deceased humans by fire was never pleasing to God.

It condemned the practice on five different occasions, 1884, twice in 1886, 1892 and as late as 1926.

However, Schmidt pointed out that the Roman Catholic Church in 1963 essentially ignored its five previous statements opposing cremation when it made a 180-degree turn away from these positions and began allowing Roman Catholics to be cremated.

This occurred when Pope Paul VI in 1963, speaking *ex cathedra*, announced his approval of cremation. "To justify his acquiescence, he said the 'souls will be reunited with their bodies' on the day of resurrection even if they are cremated. Then in 1997 the Roman Catholic Church

went even further in its capitulation when in Canada the Holy See granted permission to have the cremains of the body brought into the church during a church funeral."

Pope Paul VI's 1963 pronouncement gave the cremation movement a big boost.

Christian clergy usually tell their members that the Bible is essentially silent on cremation, or that it does not forbid it according to Schmidt's book.

Greece is the only country in the European Union in which cremation is not practiced.

"Christ Himself was buried, not burned," Bishop Theoklitos Koumarianos, an Orthodox spokesman told the *New York Times* in an article published in the *Christian News*, July 14, 2003.

Orthodox churches, contrary to most other denominations, do not permit cremation.

"But upon closer examination, one finds a certain amount of ambivalence reflected in some of the Orthodox literature," Schmidt wrote.

He cited an article "Cremation" in *A Dictionary of Greek Orthodoxy* (1984) that states, "there is no definite dogmatical basis on which the stand of the Church against cremation can be unshakably supported." It goes on to say, "in spite of the fact there is no synodical binding decision of pan-Orthodox authority against cremation, there are definite opinions against it."

About 1,000 people died in Athens in 1987 in an extreme heat spell. The mayor asked the Orthodox Archbishop of the Church of Greece to permit these dead people to be cremated because he felt they posed pos-

sible health hazards. The Archbishop denied the mayor's request, *Dust to Dust, or Ashes to Ashes?* revealed.

Schmidt's book reported that a rector of St. John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Church in Washington, D.C., boldly said, "at the root of the recent practice of cremation lies the denial of eternal life."

Virtually all American Protestant groups, including conservative denominations, permit cremations, arguing that the Bible does not prohibit cremation.

Why have so many clergy and their churches assented to cremation, especially since Christianity had rejected it for almost 2,000 years? That was the question Schmidt posed in his book.

"Much of the answer lies in the powerful influence of today's secularized culture has had on the clergy and churches," Schmidt wrote, answering his own question.

Christian clergy haven't taught church members how earth burial is, "biblically speaking, related to the physical resurrection of the body," Schmidt charged. "Here the burial of Jesus Christ is significant. For it was His burial that served as the ultimate model the early Christians followed and that played a major role in their rejection of the cremation practices of the pagan Romans.

"The early Christians understood, whether it was the burial of Jesus Christ, or of anyone else, that there was a real connection between the grave and the resurrection of the body. With cremation, however, where there is no body in the grave, belief in the resurrection of the body is mostly an abstract thought, divorced from any biblical imagery."

Schmidt pointed out that Christ's burial is significant for another reason, "one that harks back to Deuteronomy 21:22-23, which says, 'If a man guilty of a capital offense is put to death and his body is hung on

a tree, you must not leave his body on the tree overnight... because anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse.' Thus, Christ was made 'a curse for us' (Galatians 3:13), similar to a criminal who 'hung on a tree is under God's curse' (Deuteronomy 21:23b). Moreover, the criminal was not to 'desecrate the land' (Deuteronomy 21:23c). In light of this background, Christ's crucified body had to be taken down from the cross promptly after His crucifixion, and according to Joshua 7:15, 25, an accursed criminal had to be purged by burning him. This marked Christ to be cremated, and the high priest Caiaphas and his associates, who surely knew of this biblical requirement, were undoubtedly prepared to burn Him, the cursed one, similar to the burning of Achan in Joshua 7:25. But God intervened through Joseph of Arimathea who 'went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body' (Mark 15:43)."

Pilate gave Christ's body to Joseph of Arimathea. Schmidt says that most Christians, unfamiliar with the accounts in Deuteronomy 21:22-23 and Joshua 7:15, 25, don't realize that Christ would not have been buried or entombed, but cremated had God not intervened through Joseph of Arimathea.

As Schmidt so eloquently puts it, "the doctrine of the resurrection body, based on Christ's own resurrection, is the lynch pin of Christianity. If cremation fosters a vague belief in only the survival of the soul, and the soul is never seen as becoming reunited with its body on Resurrection Day, then it shatters Christianity's cardinal doctrine. For as St. Paul told the Corinthian Christians, 'For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen

asleep in Christ are lost' (I Corinthians 15:16-18)."

Early councils of the Christian Church issued no decrees prohibiting cremation because none was needed—cremation was one cultural practice Christians didn't imitate, even in their weaker moments

Derived from the Latin word *cremare* (to burn), cremation—burning dead human beings—did not occur until sometime between 2,500 and 2,000 years before Christ in India.

Some scholars believe the burning of human corpses began because ancient people feared the dead. The Roman writer Pliny the Elder (A.D. 23-79) speculated that the ancient Greeks did it in part to prevent buried bodies from being stolen by thieves or disturbed by other miscreants.

By the fourth century, cremation was very rare, Schmidt noted, pointing out that the lingering practice of cremation in some regions, led Charlemagne the Great (ruler of the Holy Roman Empire) to outlaw cremation sometime between 775 and 809 A.D.

The first earth burial recorded in the Old Testament is that of Abraham's wife, Sarah (Genesis 23:19).

The roots of earth burial not only go back to Abraham, but even to Adam. For instance, shortly after Adam's fall into sin, God told him that not only would he die, but his body, created out of the dust of the earth, would return to dust:

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Genesis 3:19).

According to Schmidt, "these words, spoken soon after Adam's fall into sin, are a clear indication that God's plan is for the deceased human body to be laid in an earthen grave."

Christians who believe cremation is acceptable, and that God has no

objections to it, may seriously want to ask why God Himself chose to bury Moses in an earthen grave.

“So Moses ... died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab ... but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.” (Deuteronomy 34:5-6.)

Throughout the entire Old Testament, cremation, the act of destroying deceased humans by fire was never pleasing to God.

That’s especially evident with regard to the king of Moab, who took bones from the king of Edom’s tomb and burned them to lime.

In response to this action, God has the prophet Amos declare:

“Thus saith the Lord; For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime: But I will send a fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the palaces of Kiriath: and Moab shall die with tumult, with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet” (Amos 2:1-2).

Early Christians saw cremation as unbiblical, unthinkable and sacrilegious.

Another basic belief affected by the cremation funeral is the biblical doctrine of hell. As Schmidt pointed out, Christians have from the beginning declared that there is indeed a heaven and hell. Christ Himself said that some “shall be in danger of hell fire.” (Matthew 5:22).

Schmidt pointed out that the reality and existence of hell is a traditional Christian doctrine, and added a priest in the Orthodox Church in America, who sees cremation as violating basic Christian beliefs, asks, “Do we really think it appropriate to pray, ‘Deliver them from eternal fire’ while offering their earthly remains to be consumed by temporal fire?”

It is this kind of concern that has some Christian opponents of crema-

tion calling it “the devil’s fire,” Schmidt wrote.

One of the facts of cremation that many people, including some Christians who favor it, evidently don’t know or think about is that cremation is the ultimate form of violence, Schmidt wrote. They also apparently don’t realize that fire in the Bible is, for the most part, a symbol of evil, destruction and sometimes a portrait of hell.

The words “ashes to ashes” appear in the funeral rituals of many denominations, but they have no biblical foundation, Schmidt pointed

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out. The words “ashes to ashes” as part of the phrase, “earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust,” first appeared in a funeral ritual when the Church of England’s *Book of Common Prayer* appeared in 1549.

The words “dust to dust” have a solid biblical base, because God told Adam right after the Fall that “dust you are and to dust you will return” (Genesis 3:19.) But the words “ashes to ashes” do not have a biblical source or precedent. The Bible never speaks about dead bodies turning to ashes.

In describing cremation, Schmidt says it takes place in a crematorium furnace, “which resembles a large bread oven.” It is “called a retort. After the body is laid into what is usually a brick-lined furnace; it is fired up to between 1,700 and 2,500

degrees Fahrenheit for approximately 90 minutes to two hours.”

If the bones of cremated corpses don’t burn, they are pulverized by a grinding process that reduces the bones to small granules resembling dried fertilizer pellets. These granules aren’t ashes, although people refer to them as such.

Individuals who incinerate their loved ones, can select from a large variety of urns. People aren’t necessarily limited to urns. At least one place, Robert H. Schuller’s Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, Calif. has had the ashes of some individuals crafted into its stained glass windows.

Clergy and churches have often accepted cremation because it reportedly costs much less than earth burial. That’s not true, Schmidt wrote. The cost of the average cremation funeral is only about \$250 less than that of an earth burial, according to Schmidt.

The rejection of Christianity’s longstanding opposition to cremation by today’s clergy and churches “may have transferred to other Christian beliefs and, thus, unwittingly weakened people’s conviction in them,” Schmidt wrote. “...the church’s acceptance of cremation encouraged people ... to reject the belief that Christ didn’t live a sinless life, to no longer see pre-marital sex cohabitation as sinful, to accept abortion on demand, and to no longer see homosexual behavior as sinful.”

Schmidt concluded his powerful, eye-opening book by saying: “For Christians, cremation simply is not a God-pleasing option ... Burial is the only God-given way of honorably disposing of the dead ... Is cremation Christian? Positively no! It is of heathen origin ... a barbarous act, also anti-biblical; therefore unchristian!”

The Church That Souvlaki Built

by Andrew Galarneau

In October, Holy Protection Orthodox Church, a parish of seven adults and three children, purchased a building in Tonawanda, NY to become its new church.

The building cost \$110,000. The parish paid cash, with money left over to fund the required renovations. Every dollar was earned from the sale of souvlaki, Greek meat skewers, over eight years of a local summer festival.

The story of Holy Protection's new home is a story of love, faith, and hard work. It's a story about what people can accomplish with a lot of prayers and dear friends who are devoted to the Theotokos.

The love started in the Holy Orthodox Church in North America parishes in Toronto. Canada's largest city is about 90 minutes to two hours away from Tonawanda, depending on highway and border conditions.

Eight years ago, Metropolitan Makarios was talking about fundraising possibilities with a group in Toronto, and mentioned a festival he knew of in Tonawanda, just north of Buffalo, NY.

The Metropolitan served the mission parish there, a small group of people who had been gathering in a rented church for a decade. He was able to serve Divine Liturgy there about once every five weeks. Otherwise, Holy Protection's tiny flock gathered for reader's services on Saturday night and Sunday morning.

Last year we tried to raise money with Greek baked goods at the festival, called Canal Fest, the Metropolitan told listeners. But we didn't make much money from the week-long event, a few hundred dollars.

Souvlaki, that's what you should do, someone said. (Asked about the conversation in 2005, the Metropolitan couldn't remember who mentioned it first.)

Souvlaki. Grilled meat on a stick, served in a toasted pita with lettuce, tomato, onions, feta cheese and Greek-salad-dressing-like sauce. Ordinary, to Greeks.

For the people of Tonawanda, the impact was immediate. Metropolitan Makarios gathered a crew of volunteers from the Toronto parishes, and organized a place for them to work in Tonawanda, the kitchen of a shuttered bowling alley. He ordered cases of meat and vegetables from wholesalers, and put several Torontonians with restaurant experience in charge.

The volunteers put marinated meat on skewers, and packed them in plastic boxes. The skewers were cooked on a gas grill, in a cloud of savory smoke that attracted bystanders under a tent at the corner of Young and Main streets.

The tent was amid a row of non-profit organizations offering food to the crowds attending the event. It was directly in front of an apartment building where Mother Macaria, a house nun and Holy Protection parishioner, lives.

The Metropolitan remembers reviewing the receipts of the first day—hundreds of dollars—more than the entire week's receipts from the previous year.

Now this is more like it, the Metropolitan remembers thinking.

Every year since then, Holy Protection's souvlaki has been a fixture on non-profit row at Canal Fest. Every year since then, a core group of Toronto parishioners, led by the Metropolitan, have refined the process.

A half-dozen or so have worked nearly every Canal Fest, giving a week to 10 days to the work, in praise of the Mother of God. They have managed a group of volunteers that fluctuated from year to year, but usually numbers about 20. Some volunteers come for a day, others for a few days to a week.

Every year, there were temptations, of course. A few years were spent working in kitchens that were ill-equipped or just plain dingy. One year the crew's only running water came from a hose run through the wall to an apartment next door. The workers endured 14-hour days and threadbare motel sheets.

Food costs went up, they charged more, and people still came. It rained, and they moved the electronic equipment out of the water and kept selling to the customers who wanted souvlaki so bad they stood in a downpour to get it.

One of the two grills caught on fire, a modest little blaze, and the crew pulled out the flaming parts to douse them without stopping work.

Every year, they have built on the successes of the past. Every year, the souvlaki crew did better.

Better skewers, better meat, better portion control, better processing. Better tent, better booth design, better signage, better refrigeration.

Better crowds. Each year the receipts went up.

Hundreds of people waited in line during the dinner and weekend rushes, and the workers adjusted by selling souvlaki tickets to people waiting in line.

Every year, customers implore the crew to open a restaurant. Every year, they're told: You'll just have to come back next year.

Over the years, the Holy Protection souvlaki stand has become the second-biggest earner among the nonprofit groups at the festival. In first place: the beer tent.

In 2005, the souvlaki stand offered festival-goers a chicken souvlaki sandwich for \$4.75 and a beef souvlaki sandwich for \$5. Soda and water were \$2.

The stand took in more than \$50,000. After paying rent on the kitchen, food costs, volunteer hotel rooms at a Microtel, storage for the equipment, renting a refrigerated trailer, sales tax, the festival's percentage, and myriad other expenses, more than half was profit.

After the festival was over, Metropolitan Makarios guided the parishioners in purchasing a commercial building he'd spotted for sale nearby. It was big enough to include a church, one where the sanctuary would at last face east. But it also had room for a souvlaki kitchen, with a commercial walk-in freezer-refrigeration unit.

Thanks to years of prayers and hundreds of hands, Holy Protection Orthodox Church hopes to complete its renovations this spring. After all, July will be coming soon, and there will be souvlaki to make.



Axios!

Father Michael Waples began his adult life with a career in electrical engineering. He helped design Flight Control Computers (auto-pilots) for large commercial aircraft. After about ten years in this area he felt the pull to do something else which led him to seek the ministry. He graduated from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN in 1976 and served parishes in Nebraska and Iowa in the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. Fr. Michael had a strong desire to read and study the Early Church Fathers and through this process and struggle he came to realize the Church that the Fathers describe and the church that he was serving in were two different realities. By God's grace he was led to the Orthodox Church and Metropolitan Ephraim. He resigned as a pastor in 2002 and moved his family to Northfield, MN to attend Prophet Elias Church in St. Paul. The entire Waples family was baptized on Sept 30/Oct 13 of that year in the St. Croix River. St. Gregory of Armenia is their family saint. By God's grace Fr Michael was ordained a priest on July 17/30, 2006.



Metropolitan Ephraim with newly ordained priest Fr. Michael Waples and family

Axios!

Father Michael Knox was born February 25th 1975 in Danvers, MA. He was baptized at the age of two at St. John the Russian Church in Ipswich, MA. He grew up in Ipswich and has lived there his entire life. Fr. Michael graduated from high school in 1993 and went to Salem State College in Salem, MA where he graduated with a degree in Business in 1998. He was married in 2002 to Vassiliki Dounas who is from Toronto. They met through the nuns at the convents in Brookline, MA and Newmarket, ON. They have two sons; Andrew, is 2 1/2 years old and Matthew James was born on September 5, 2006. Fr. Michael works in Woburn, MA as a purchasing agent for a manufacturer and distributor of doors, windows and other building products. He was ordained to the Diaconate at the Church of St. John the Russian on the Saint's feast day May 27th/June 9th, 2006 by Metropolitan Ephraim. Here is a request from the new deacon. "I humbly ask for everyone's prayers and we in turn pray for everyone in all of our parishes, monasteries, convents, hermitages, and sketes."



Fr. Michael Knox, Metropolitan Ephraim and Fr. John Knox

Monasteries as Missions

Reprinted from *THE G.O.Y.A. MISSIONARY*

We heard of Brother Panteleimon, the first American Greek monk, and wrote asking if he would address some remarks to our committee concerning monasteries as missions. Here is his reply, and we pray you will hear, with your spiritual ears, his words:

January 15, 1959

“May the joy of our Saviour be with you always.

“With great joy I received your letter of January 9th and read its contents. I had been to New York for nine days and upon my return found your letter waiting. Tomorrow I leave for Minneapolis, Minnesota, upon the invitation of the local G.O.Y.A. Chapter, to speak at the opening of the Memorial Chapel Drive.

“In answer to your letter, I am a monk of the Holy Mountain (Athos), born and raised in Detroit, Michigan. In the fall of 1956 I left for the Holy Mountain and after serving my novitiate was tonsured a monk, receiving the name Panteleimon. From Christmas to Easter of 1958 I was in the Holy Land and served in the Church of the Holy Resurrection. Last summer I returned to the U.S. with hopes that a monastic community could be started among our people here. Unfortunately, three days after my arrival our beloved Archbishop, a great friend and supporter of the monastic tradition, fell asleep.

“Presently, I am staying at the home of our Bishop here in Boston, who had the kindness to offer me his hospitality. The Theological School is very close, thus, I visit it often. To my great joy there is a chapel in the house dedicated to the First-called of the Apostles, St. Andrew, which has Byzantine icons, and I say my offices there. But my stay here is temporary, for if a monastery isn’t started I shall return to my obedience at the Holy Mountain. It is not to my spiritual welfare to remain outside a monastic environment. Because I was born and raised in this country, I know our youth and am sure that others would become monks also if a Greek Orthodox monastery existed.

“As for the purpose of such a monastery, it would be to transplant and perpetuate Orthodox Spirituality in this country. The monastery must begin and always remain faithful to the three monastic precepts—fasting, vigilance, and prayer. Its aim must be the command of our Lord, ‘Be ye perfect as your Father is perfect in Heaven.’ It must wage the good battle against the devil, and become a living example of the ‘new creation’ of which St. Paul writes. It must live and breathe in Christ, thus showing the world His beauty and power.

“As to the services which a monastery can offer, they are many. Monasticism has always been a vital part of Orthodoxy. Through its heroic spirit of sacrifice and dedication it has offered great saints and leaders to the Church—living examples of angelic men. Its greatest contribution has been and is prayer.

“In this country a monastery can become a center of Orthodox piety—a spiritual oasis. It can immediately begin to make icons in the ancient tradition. This in itself is a great service, for Byzantine icons are silent sermons of Orthodox piety, heralds of the Church’s theology, blueprints of the coming restored order, visions of the new Creation.

“Because of the spiritual environment in the monastery and the dedication of the brothers to Christ and the Church, much work can be done in the field of translation. The lives of the Saints and Patristic writings can be translated. In the beginning they can be printed at a low cost in Greece. (While in Greece I made the acquaintance of a pious publisher in Athens). One of the goals of a future monastery would be the acquisition of a printing press, to do its own printing, as the Russian Monastery of Jordanville, NY does.

“After the monastery matured spiritually it could offer guidance in the spiritual life, and send out confessors, especially trained in spiritual matters, to confess the people during the lenten periods. It could become another Optina of Russia, which had tremendous influence on the Russian intelligentsia of the last century.

“All three above-mentioned items deal with internal missionary activity—with how to get the message of our Lord to our people through the living example, the icon, printed material in English, and spiritual guidance; thus, bringing about a spiritual awakening and blossoming of Orthodoxy in this country.

“If the brotherhood ever reached a sufficient number, then it could even entertain thoughts of foreign missionary activity. Missionary monks could be sent to the Far East and Africa. The Orthodox missions of the Far East today owe their existence to the missionary activity of Russian monks of the last century. A small

group could even be sent to the Holy Land to serve at our shrines there, on a five-year rotation basis. There is no end as to what could be done through the mercy of God for the good of the Church.

“But it should always be kept in mind that all these things are secondary. They are the fruit of many years’ labors and pains. The primary goal is our very Saviour Himself—to become citizens of that Celestial City made by God Himself. The paramount thing would always be to wage the good battle against the devil and, through inner attention, fasting, vigilance, and unceasing prayer become perfect as our Father is in Heaven.

“All these things are dreams now and I am only one person, by myself, a poor and weak one at that. But my Master is rich and strong, and if it pleases Him, all is possible.

“Forgive me for prattling. It is past midnight.

“May God bless your family and work. May our Saviour save us and His Pure Mother protect us. May we be deemed worthy of the New Jerusalem.

“With much love of Christ, I humbly embrace you. Your brother, Panteleimon—monk and pilgrim and my guardian angel.”

Brother Panteleimon, Monk
St. Andrew’s House
180 Pond Street,
Jamaica Plain, MA

The importance of monastic life, or “the angelic life,” as it is called by the Fathers of the Church can never be underestimated. Brother Panteleimon here-with presents his ideas concerning that important phase of Orthodox spiritual life which has been overlooked in the United States.

Our Church history shows us that where ever the Church had a strong spiritual influence on its members, this was due to the Staretz (Spiritual fathers—“gerontes”) of the monasteries. Let us pray that we will see an awakening of Orthodox spirituality in this country and that many of our younger brethren will espouse the life dedicated to: Prayer, fasting, and obedience to Christ’s will. All these means are not the end itself, but only the method through which *théosis* is accomplished, *théosis* being the goal of Orthodox Christian existence.

Holy Orthodox
Metropolis of Boston
Income and Expense Statement
January - December, 2005

Income	
General Donations	2,649
Donations for new copier	14,731
Picnic	1,610
Special Donations	13,821
Miscellaneous	122
Parish Assessments	29,786
Refunds	262
Reimbursement funds for printing, etc.	6,671
St. Xenia Camp	19,151
Pamphlets, Faithful Steward, True Vine	<u>6,174</u>
	94,977
Cost of Goods Sold	<u>2,163</u>
Total Income	92,814
Expenses	
Automobile Expense	1,895
New copier	13,440
Bank fees	42
Building	100
Charity	23,452
Computer Items	2,428
Discretionary expense	229
Dues, Subscriptions, Books	2,942
Insurance	7,284
Interest on loan for diocesan house	4,824
Medical Expenses Metropolitan Ephraim	5,314
Miscellaneous	1,102
Office	4,256
Postage	1,998
Printing and Reproduction	10,695
St. Xenia Camp	15,432
Travel	7,972
Utilities	<u>11,229</u>
Total Expenses	114,634
Income less expenses	-21,820
Interest	<u>1,563</u>
Net income	-20,257

Report From the Bahamas

by Fr. David Belden

Thanks to the proceeds from the sale of the Bahamian Calendar for 2006, I was able once again to travel to the Bahamas and serve for the Maillis family for Holy Week and Pascha.

The Maillis' now live on Long Island, Bahamas, about 200 miles from Nassau. Since a connection between Nassau and Long Island cannot be made on the day of arrival, an overnight in a Nassau hotel is necessary both coming and going. Reasonable rates (for the time of year) were found at the El Greco in downtown Nassau.

Thanks to our efficient travel agent, Deacon Yakov Tseitlin, an inexpensive return flight from Toronto with a stopover in Tampa was booked for me. The stipulation was that I had to take three weeks. This worked out perfectly because I was able to spend Holy Week and Bright Week in the Bahamas, and the following week in Tampa with my mother who is now 90 years old.

I arrived in Nassau on Tuesday of Holy Week and left for Long Island the next day. It is always good to see the "Orthodox Family Robinson" as I call the Maillis'. The family worked very hard to transform an upstairs room into a chapel called St. Andrew's-by-the-Sea, and I was astounded at the changes since I was last there.

On Wednesday evening Holy Unction was served. The Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil was served on Holy Thursday morning, and the Service of the Twelve Gospels took place that evening. On Holy Friday, Vespers was served



The Maillis choir chanting by the epitaphios on Holy Friday.

at 2:00 p.m. followed in the evening by the Praises which were beautifully chanted. On Holy Saturday morning the Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil was celebrated, and the Paschal Night began at 11:30 p.m. A festive Paschal breakfast was served at about 3:00 a.m. Agape Vespers was served on Sunday afternoon, and on Bright Tuesday at the Community Centre in Clarence Town. This was followed by a lecture entitled: "The Faith of Christ." Left-over food was distributed the next day to some poor families on the Island.

The Bahamas are ripe for harvest as far as Orthodoxy is concerned. The well-known priest-architect, Fr. Jerome Hawes, who ended his days as a hermit on Cat Island, arrived on the Islands in 1911. He built several beautiful Anglican churches, and when he returned many years later as a Roman Catholic priest, he built more! Long Island boasts several of his churches including St. Peter's (Roman Catholic), and St. Paul's (Anglican), both architectural gems.

For many years the Bahamas were under the pastoral care of Bishop Spence Burton, S.S.J.E. (Society of St. John the Evangelist), also known as the Cowley Fathers of Cambridge, MA. All the Bahamas reflect the 'catholic' churchmanship of that Anglican monastic community. The present bishop told me that the Diocese of Nassau and the Bahamas was considering 'breaking communion' with the American and Canadian Anglican Churches over certain ultra-liberal trends in those bodies.

It was my privilege, many years ago, as a young Anglican priest, to meet (the then retired) Bishop Burton at the monastery in Cambridge. He had, by the way, been spiritual father to the famous Isabella Stewart Gardener, of the Gardener Museum fame.

For this reason, and having read *The Hermit of Cat Island*, the story of Fr. Jerome, I always had a desire to visit these beautiful Islands. This desire was realized when I heard of our isolated Orthodox family, the Maillis', through the beautiful Bahamian Calendar.

It has been my privilege to minister to the family for at least eight visits. They have asked me to come for Nativity, 2006, and Theophany, 2007. But of course that depends on how many Bahamian Calendars, the proceeds of which pay my airfare to the Bahamas, we are able to sell between now and then! Anyone who has seen The Bahamian Calendar knows it is well worth the price of \$15 (U.S.).

Please consider giving this beautiful calendar (the only means of support) for our "Orthodox Family Robinson," the Maillis', as Christmas gifts this year. Calendars can be purchased from frdavidbelden@yahoo.ca.

Fr. Jerome brought Anglicanism, and many years later, Roman Catholicism to the Bahamas. Now the precious gift of the Orthodox Faith has been brought to the Islands. Glory be to God for all things!



Fr. David Belden and the Maillis family.

Friends of Ugandan Orphans

3 mile Walk-a-thon

**Artesani Park,
Soldiers Field Rd
Brighton, MA**

**June 23, 2007
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

**Complete the course on foot, in your wheelchair
or
Be a sponsor**

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**Eutychios Nick Kalogerakis
(617) 522-4161 or (781) 844-7740**

**Daniel Lane
(978) 256-7715**

Instead of singing in the rain like Debbie Reynolds, on October 8, 2005 and June 10, 2006, I was rolling in the rain. On both days I completed three miles around Artesani Park in Brighton, MA. The first time I used my manual wheelchair and it took me two hours. The next time I had the good fortune of a donated hand cycle from the Boston Wheelchair Sports and Recreation Association. This enabled me to complete the course in 45 minutes. But it was all for a good cause: a walkathon, organized by The Friends of Ugandan Orphans whose office is on 1476 Centre Street in Roslindale. As I rolled my chair I was also rolling in the money for Ugandan orphans. Thus I was not alone in my

efforts. There were other participants on the walk and many sponsors both local and international helped to raise over \$12,000 for the orphans. This is my opportunity on behalf of Friends of Ugandan Orphans to say "THANK YOU" to all these folks. Many businesses in Massachusetts helped us out, and some of the local sponsors included Captain Nemo's, Jamaica Plain; Mall Cleaners, Needham; St Anna's and St Mark's Orthodox Churches, Roslindale; KCP Realty, Roche Brothers, West Roxbury.

Last but not least is The Bulletin Newspaper Inc. for their June 1 article. We are already gearing up for the June 2007 walkathon and hopefully I will be rolling in the sun.



A. J Maragos and Fr. Thomas on the June 2006 Walk-a-thon

Grand Opening of the Diocesan House in Toronto

Amidst the chanting of “Christ is Risen” and the hymns and prayers of the Blessing of the Waters, some 400 faithful of the Metropolis of Toronto gathered on Thomas Sunday April 17/30, 2006, to celebrate the opening of the new Metropolis Center, “St. Nicholas House.” Metropolitan Makarios of Toronto was joined by several visiting clergy in conducting the service and leading the celebration. Refreshments were served by a committee headed by Mrs. G. Fotinos and Mrs. D. Taxidis.

The highlight of the day’s activities was the presentation of a hand-painted fresco icon of St. Nicholas gifted by the men who serve with the Metropolitan in the various Divine Services. The icon was painted at Holy Nativity Convent, Brookline, MA and is placed in the reception hall of St. Nicholas House. Also presented to the Metropolitan was a set of vestments including epitrachilion, small omophorion and epimanikia. This set has been placed in the prayer room to be used during the reading of various prayers and the hearing of confessions.

St. Nicholas House is located at 150 Steeles Avenue East, at the intersection of Henderson Avenue, in the Thornhill neighborhood of the Toronto suburb of Markham, ON. The building is a tri-level, single family dwelling with a finished lower level, and includes a large reception hall, Metropolis offices, prayer room, two guest rooms as well as a large 5-bed guest room en suite. The house also provides living quarters for the Metropolitan. The exterior is landscaped with ample trees, bushes, and flowering plants. The property features a bi-level deck which is at the rear of the house and is enclosed by a fence.

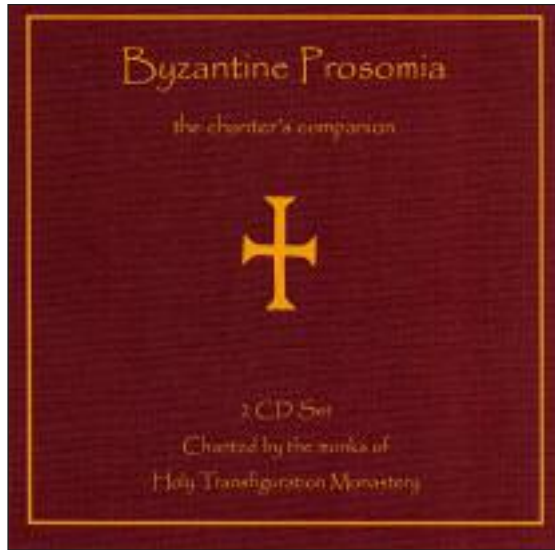
The new Metropolis Center will serve as a meeting place for various functions including educational programs, publications, efforts to support synodal missionary endeavors, fundraising, and charitable activities.

All are invited to visit, especially any visitors to Toronto. The Metropolis may be reached at (905) 762-0126; Fax (905) 763-6713. You may email MetMakarios@homt.ca or visit our website: www.homt.ca.



Pictured with Metropolitan Makarios are Monk Sergius, Archpriest George Kochergin, Archimandrite Panteleimon Presbyter Sergius Pellegrini and Hieromonk (now Bishop) Demetrius

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About Our Logo *A Divine Confirmation*

The cross on our masthead commemorates the miraculous appearance of the sign of the Cross near Athens on Sept. 14 (according to the traditional Orthodox calendar) in 1925. Anti-Orthodox and secularist forces in power in Greece, together with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, had forced the changing of the traditional church calendar in 1924 as a first step toward uniting with the heterodox churches of the West. Shining in the evening sky on the traditional feast day of the Exaltation of the Cross, this extraordinary appearance of the Cross is a divine confirmation of Holy Tradition in the Orthodox Church and of the calendar as one facet of Holy Tradition.

The Faithful Steward is the official newsletter of the Holy Orthodox Church in North America. Under the editorship of Metropolitan Ephraim of Boston, *The Faithful Steward* appears three times yearly, and is delivered free of charge to the faithful of the Holy Metropolis of Boston. For others, a donation of \$1.50 an issue is requested.

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THE DIOCESE NEEDS SUPPORT

“Every good giving and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights” (James 1:17). The perfect gift is the one that only membership in the Church can give: the knowledge of true worship and the grace of the Holy Mysteries. But our era suffers from a famine of truth and the true worship of God. In our weak way, we try to feed those who hunger for God. Your prayers and your donations help the Church in this awe-inspiring ministry. Another way to help is to make a bequest to the Church in your will. Remember that God loves a cheerful giver. Also remember that *The Faithful Steward*, although delivered free of charge to all members of our Metropolis, is in need of your support.

